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2005 Air Show brings high-flying action and fun to NAF EL Centro

By JO1 Jeannette Bowles

Naval Air Facility El Centro opened its gates Saturday, March 12 as an estimated 20,000 people from around the country came to watch the United States Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the "Blue Angels," kick off its 2005 Air Show Season.

The gates opened at 9 a.m. and among the many food and souvenir booths were static displays of vintage to modern-day airplanes. The California National Guard unit from El Centro even brought an M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank for display.

From the Navy-side of the



Photo by Glenn Bloore

house, personnel from the Region's Navy Recruiting District brought along the Navy's flight simulator, which

allowed the attendees a chance to experience the feel of riding in a jet aircraft.

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Billy Blanks flies high with the Blue Angels

By JO1 Jeannette Bowles

Fitness expert and actor Billy Blanks has done many things in his life. In addition to being a seven-time world karate champion, creating the form of exercise known as Tae Bo, and being a physical fitness trainer to some of Hollywood's elite, Blanks has also traveled around the world in support of U.S. troops. The one thing he hadn't done though was fly with the U.S. Navy Blue Angels. So when opportunity came knocking, he answered the door.

On February 19, Blanks received a VIP backseat with the Blue Angels.

"I thought it was a privilege and an honor to be asked that," said Blanks. "It's a chance of a lifetime to get up in the air and see what these guys do. It's just awesome."

Blanks arrived at NAF El Centro with his assistant and his brother, CMDRCM(AW/SW) Charles Blanks who was instrumental in securing a ride

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Billy Blanks

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for Billy.

"My brother asked me if I wanted to fly," said Blanks. "He mentioned the Blue Angels and I said, 'Yeah man, if you can get me an opportunity to fly with these guys I would really appreciate it.' So he called and the next thing you know, I'm here."

Fog on the flightline almost prevented Blanks from taking his ride, but by mid-morning the fog had burned off and Blanks was ready to go.

Before his flight Blanks said he had a chance to see the background and get behind the scenes to see how the Blue Angels prepare for a launch.

In addition, he was given a briefing so that he would know what to expect in the air. Blanks said although he was a little bit nervous, he was looking forward to his ride.

"I was most looking forward to experiencing the reaction of the jet and experiencing the height of power," said Blanks.



Billy Blanks (Right) poses with his brother, Charles, before his flight. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



Cmdr. Steve Foley, the Blue Angels Boss, meets with Billy Blanks before Blanks' flight. Blanks had an opportunity to meet and speak with all the Blue Angels during his visit to NAF El Centro. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

As Blanks was strapped into his seat and given a few last minute instructions before his flight, he gave a thumbs up and smiled.

"I'd like to tell the Blue Angels I really appreciate them giving me the opportunity," said Blanks. "I love the armed forces. I just came back from Iraq and it was a good time with the troops. For me it's just an honor and a privilege to be in their presence because they're serving our country and they're helping the world. I just want to say thank you for your power and your strength and your love for our country. I'm going to stand strong and be behind them all the way."



Above: AM1 Chris Fancher (Left) and AD1 Patrick Palma (Right) prepare Blanks for his flight in the Blue Angels' No. 7 jet. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

Below: Blanks waits for his flight as the pilot, Lt. John Allison, makes final preparations. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



The Sandpaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services and their families. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense (DoD), or the U.S. Navy and do not imply endorsement thereof.

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Easter hops early into Child Development Center



 On March 23, Easter came early for some NAE El Centro youngsters as the Easter Bunny paid a special visit to the Child Development Center! During the visit, the children took pictures with the Easter Bunny and participated in an Easter egg hunt. After, the festivities, they enjoyed cake and other goodies during their spring party.





Special visit has Sea Cadets seeing stars at NAFEC

By ABF2(AW) Robert Chiaravallotti
Sea Cadet Executive Officer

The Sea Cadets of Desert Eagle Squadron held their most recent weekend drill aboard NAF El Centro, February 18-20. Scheduled were such events as physical fitness training, Color/Honor Guard rehearsal, completion of Basic Military Requirement assignments, drill rehearsal and a very special visit with the world-famous U.S. Navy Blue Angels.

Staff and instructors kept our visit with the Blue Angels a secret from the Cadets until the very last minute. Cadets awoke at 5 a.m. on Saturday morning, preparing for what they thought would be a very strenuous physical fitness regiment comprising of a three-mile run in boots and utilities.

When we arrived at the winter training site of the Blue

Angels, the Cadets realized that PT was a cover and that they were about to receive the opportunity of a lifetime and meet face-to-face with the very best of naval aviation, the Blue Angels.

Personnel from the Blue Angels Public Affairs Office kindly escorted us onto the flight line. As the Cadets rounded the corner of Hanger 5, the magnificent blue and gold F-18's used to demonstrate naval aviation precision, focus and excellence appeared.

Then out of nowhere, a familiar face began to walk from a crowd of visitors towards the young, motivated Cadets. Whispers and nervous excitement began coming from the formation.

Sixteen-year-old Leading Petty Officer, Cadet Pete Alaniz from Imperial County asked, "Is



Maj. Matthew Shortal, Blue Angels pilot No. 3, meets the Sea Cadets and gives them a tour of the planes. Meeting the Blue Angels was just one of the day's highlights. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

that who I think it is? Is that Billy Blanks?"

Yes, Billy Blanks, actor and creator of the exercise sensation "Tae Bo" approached the Sea Cadets. Blanks gave the Cadets a very inspirational speech on how you can and will achieve your dreams along with some focus, determination and hard work. Blanks was also kind enough to take some photos with the Cadets.

Suddenly, out of the morning fog, came the world-renowned Blue Angel pilots who were now approaching the formation of awe-struck Cadets.

The pilots were kind enough to meet and talk with the Cadets who were armed with an arsenal of questions. The opportunity arose for the Cadets to take some photos with the Blue Angel pilots and then tour of one of the blue and gold Blue Angel F-18s.

The Desert Eagles were then

presented a framed photo of the Blue Angels in flight over Fort Jefferson National Monument, Key West, Florida with all of the pilots' signatures. It was beautifully inscribed to the "Desert Eagle Squadron Sea Cadets".

For the Cadets, this was the opportunity of a lifetime and something they will never forget. Who knows, maybe there is a future Blue Angel pilot somewhere in the formation of these young, motivated adults.

The staff, instructors and Cadets of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Desert Eagle Squadron would like to thank everyone from the Blue Angels for arranging our visit and taking time in meeting with us. We and the Cadets greatly appreciate everything.

For more information about the Sea Cadet program contact ABF2(AW) Robert Chiaravallotti at (760) 339-2521.



Sea Cadet Commanding Officer Pedro Alaniz (Left) waits as Billy Blanks signs an autograph for him. The Sea Cadets had an opportunity to meet Blanks as well as the Blue Angels. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



The Thrift Shop has moved! They are now in Bldg. 110 (The Old Library Bldg)





Celebrating the pride and heritage of Black History Month

By JO1 Jeannette Bowles

In the summer of 1905, the Niagara Movement was born, nurtured by 29 African-Americans who were calling for full civil liberties, abolition of racial discrimination, and recognition of human brotherhood. Although the movement was dissolved five years later, it was the forerunner to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Almost 100 years later, on February 16, NAF El Centro personnel gathered together to celebrate not only the anniversary of its founding, but also Black History Month.

OS2(SW) Charleston Cobbin from NAF Security was in charge of putting together the program whose theme was the Niagara Movement, chosen by the Department of Defense. It included guest speaker, CMDCM Kevin Harris, Blue Angels Command Master Chief.

"I chose CMDCM Harris because he was highly recommend by several people and I'm glad we had him," said Cobbin.

The program began with a few words from Cobbin who reminded the audience why they were gathered together.

"Today as we celebrate this significant moment we continue to seek freedom in the nation and the world," Cobbin said.

Then, Chaplain Robert Church gave the invocation before Capt. Paul Ziegler, NAF El Centro's Commanding Officer, gave his welcoming remarks.

"The key to this whole thing is to not only recognize their achievements but to realize that we are all in this together," said Ziegler. "We work and fight together in the military. We're one no matter what race, creed, or color. We need to be together as a group to make the Navy great and the country great."

After Ziegler gave his remarks, Harris was introduced.

In his speech, Harris began with a story that showed the innocence of childhood. He said when he was four years old he knew he was "colored." Then one day his parents told him that his dog, Blackie, was color-blind. He said he held his dog's face in



Blue Angels Command Master Chief CMDCM Kevin Harris was this year's guest speaker at the Black History Month celebration held February 16. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

his hand and just knew that his dog couldn't see him. He didn't understand the difference.

"It shows the innocence of the young child," said Harris. "As a child, you have no vices and are not influenced by racism."

Harris went on to talk about the Niagara Movement and what Black History Month stands for.

"Black History Month is a time to engage and to make folks aware," said Harris. "We are all in this together. We need each other and it doesn't matter what nationality, race, creed, or color you are. We are all brothers and sisters."

"We're longing for role models of this time but don't forget those who established where we sit today," he added.

Harris said throughout Black History Month, African-Americans make it a point to educate someone.

"Racism is not inherited, it's taught and learned," said Harris. "To destroy one another we're never going to get there. Love your brothers and your sisters."

When the ceremony was

over, a special commemorative lunch was held at the galley.

Cobbin said he would like to thank everyone involved in getting the program done. He said he thought the program was a success.

"I feel that Black History is so important because being an African-American myself the least I can do is know and try to somewhat understand what those before me went through so that our race/culture could be equal," said Cobbin. "Their struggle, the passion, and their commitment had to be strong to have accomplished all that they did."



Personnel from PSD prepare to sing a song during the Black History Month program. They were just one of several groups who came to celebrate. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



Fire Department personnel bend their heads in prayer during the program's invocation given by Chaplain Robert Church. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



Sea Cadets fly high during Air Show weekend

*By Alex Alaniz
Sea Cadet*

The Blue Angels were not the only dedicated members of the Navy family to take to the skies over El Centro the weekend of March 11, 12, and 13. Members of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps Desert Eagle Squadron were able to join the Navy's elite pilots over El Centro when they were permitted to join the Fly-a-Sailor program on Sunday, March 13. This flight opportunity became the crowning jewel of an experience-filled weekend drill for the Sea Cadets.

The weekend drill began early Friday night when the unit reported to NAF to assist with the Food Fair. While at the Food Fair the cadets served as sanitation monitors by maintaining the area free of unwanted debris and assisted with the removal of trash from the area. At the end of the night, the cadets helped to take down and remove the tables and chairs from the Hanger area in record time.

In the early morning hours of Saturday, after a nutritious Navy breakfast at the galley, the Sea Cadet Unit prepared their recruiting booth by setting up picture displays and folding the information fliers to be placed on the table. The unit was then divided into several teams and assigned to assist in the Navy Ball booths, conduct recruiting while walking around the air show or manning the Sea Cadet booth.

During the day, the Sea Cadets were invited to spend time at the Blue Angels Chalet, compliments of the El Centro Navy League. Late Saturday afternoon, the cadets enjoyed a well-deserved period of rest and relaxation in the company of the Sea Cadet instructors. Saturday night before lights out, not a single cadet was left awake. The hard work had taken its toll on all.

On Sunday morning after the cadets' batteries were recharged at the galley, the unit conducted an award ceremony with two cadets being advanced in rank.



The Sea Cadets listen as Pilot John Nash talks with them about flying. The cadets had an opportunity to participate in this year's Fly-a-Sailor program. (Photo by Alex Alaniz)

Cadet Jennifer Mejia was promoted to the rank of Airman (E-3). She was required to complete the Basic Military Requirements book, the Airman book, attend boot camp and additional advance training. Cadet Ben Brown was promoted to the rank of Airman Apprentice (E-2). He was required to complete the Basic Military

Requirements book and attend boot camp.

The weekend came to a crescendo when each of the members of the unit were given rides on civilian aircraft and allowed to see the Imperial Valley from the air, under the Fly-a-Sailor program. For several of the Cadets, this was their first experience in air travel.



The Sea Cadets set up their recruiting booth during the air show on March 12. The booth contained picture displays and informational fliers on the Sea Cadet program. (Photo by Alex Alaniz)

Navy Ball Representatives

The 2005 Navy Ball is just around the corner! This year's committee members are:

*Lt. Ignatius Hickman- Chairman
Supply Department
JMC Salvador Rodriguez- Medical
ITC Peter Potter- Admin
MA1 Jose Sanjurjo- Security
Bui Elton Oliphant- Public Works
NC1 Pamela Jensen- Admin
AO2 Nicholas Ingram- Weapons
RP2 Leslie Williams- Chaplain
YN3 Jennifer Brockman- Strike
AC3 Jacob Ruiz- Operations
AGAN Matthew Oliphant- Weather
DKSN Carlos Bonnett-Castillo- PSD
Christina Sutton- MWR*



'The Security Zone'

Life on deployment: A letter to troops back home

By MA3 Amber Colosky
NAF Security

Good morning. I hope that the holidays were enjoyable for you as well as my former shoremates. I spent New Year's Eve underway, unfortunately.

The attached picture was taken while I was standing watch on a .50cal Mount. My ship was roughly five nautical miles off the coast of Djibouti, Africa.

Since we've ventured south out of the Persian Gulf into the Indian Ocean, the weather has gone from extremely cold to extremely hot. We were only eight nautical miles north of the equator, at one point.

The Ship's Master was considering a WOG Day, but couldn't afford to lose the time. Along with WOG Day being cancelled, our visit to the Seychelles was also cancelled. Too bad.

I work eight on/16 off while underway, so I try to be productive during my off-time.

While we're in port, we stand 12 on/12 off or 24 off for liberty purposes (depending on how long the port visit is). I am, currently, working on getting my ESWS Pin. There is a lot required to get pinned.

I am counting down from 44 more days onboard, now. My squadron is supposed to return to the states on or around March 10. I am looking forward to coming home, though I wouldn't trade this experience for anything.

I would like to encourage all of the first-termers in El Centro to consider all of their options before getting out of the Navy. There are many different, exciting fields they can explore and excel in.

I have a whole new outlook on the Navy since I've transferred. I miss the routine and being able to go home every day. I have been underway since December 26 and won't have liberty for at least another eight



MA3 Amber Colosky stands watch aboard her ship while deployed
(Photo submitted by MA3 Amber Colosky)

days. It gets tough sometimes, really. I have a new appreciation for so many different things that were never considered a luxury, until now: Good food, a bed that is higher than eight inches from the floor, a closet, holidays at home, time off, privacy, civilian clothing, mail, and telephone calls.

Deployments can be fun, but nothing compares to life on shore.

Well, I must go study for ESWS. Please pass along my 'hellos'. I pray that you all are doing very well. I also hope that everyone that was sent for EST is doing well and enjoying their change of jobs. Take care.

Leading the way: Security shines during inspection

By JO1 Jeannette Bowles

On February 17 after NAF El Centro's monthly Quarters, CMDCM Brian Bowman, NAF's Command Master Chief held an inspection of the Security Department. It was the first of many inspections to come for NAF personnel.

"CMC is going to pick a department to inspect every Quarters," said Security Officer Lt. Rodney Sanchez.

As Security stood in ranks, Bowman inspected their uniforms, boots, and hair lengths. Sanchez said although the inspection was not a

surprise, who the inspector was may have been.

"I told Security to have an inspection-ready uniform for Quarters," said Sanchez. "But it may have surprised them to see CMC Bowman in front of them." Sanchez said Security did very well on their inspection.

"CMC said it was an outstanding inspection," said Sanchez. "He also said that MA1 Thomas Streeter's boots were so shiny he could see his own nose hair in them."

Sanchez said for other departments to stand by because their time is coming.



CMDCM Brian Bowman inspects the Security Department after February's Quarters. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



Blue Angels

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The California Highway Patrol from San Diego was even onboard with its own recruiting booth.

At 10 a.m. it was time to begin the 2005 NAF El Centro Air Show.

The show started as MASN Elizabeth Hoppmann from NAF El Centro's Security Department sang the National Anthem a cappella. Her rendition brought a cheer from the crowd as did the U.S. Army's Black Daggers who followed the singing of the anthem and who were the first performers on the list.

Although this was billed as a Blue Angels air show, there were also other military and civilian aircraft performing in the show.

Five Army Black Daggers jumped from their aircraft and dazzled the crowd as they made their way to the ground with their black and red parachutes.



Following them were civilian performers Eric Beard who flew in his YAK 54 and Jacquie Warda Pitts who began flying when she was in her 30s and performed in her first air show at the age of 50.

After Pitts exited the skies, Rich Perkins and his Firecat L29 performed for the crowd who braved the 90-plus degree weather.

Other acts included a pilot who performed aerial acrobatics in the sky with his plane. Throughout his loops, spins, and other tricks, he kept in radio contact with the crowd.

As the time grew closer for the Blue Angels to make their



appearance, spectators were treated to a demonstration by the U.S. Air Force who brought along an F-16 Fighting Falcon and two World War II-era P51 Mustangs.

They were followed by an F-18 and the Wall-of-Fire. The F-18 flew in from Palm Desert, Calif. for its appearance in the air show.

The Black Daggers made a second appearance as they were the last act to perform before the Blue Angels took to the field.

The Blue Angels' Fat Albert went up first as it demonstrated its jet-assisted takeoff (JATO) for the crowd of spectators.

Fat Albert is a C-130 Hercules that is operated by an all-Marine crew of three officers and five enlisted personnel.

As Fat Albert climbed into the skies with its rockets blazing, the crowd cheered.

Finally, it was time for the Blue Angels to put all their hard work and practice into show mode.

Led by Blue Angel Boss



Cmdr. Steve Foley in the No.1 plane, six demonstration pilots in their blue and gold F/A-18 Hornets performed a 25-minute show for the crowd.

de-lis in which the jets fly together straight up into the air and then separate into different directions, creating a flower look with their smoke.



Among the maneuvers was their diamond formation where each jet maintains a minimum distance of 18 inches apart from canopy to wingtip and the fleur-

The Blue Angels' 120-plus hours of practice paid off as the crowd cheered during their performance and when they landed.

The Blue Angels' first show of the 2005 season was a success as it drew praise from those who attended the show.



Photo Credits

Clockwise from top left: Firecat plane. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) Blue Angels in their planes. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) The Blue Angels wait their turn. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) The 2005 Blue Angels team. (Photo by Pierce Haviland, member of the New York Chapter of the Navy League) An Army Black Dagger (Photo by JOI Jeannette Bowles)



Photo Credits

Center: Blue Angels No. 5 takes off. (Photo by Pierce Haviland) Clockwise from top left: Blue Angels perform. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) A civilian performer. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) The Air Force's Heritage flight. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) The Blue Angels perform together (Photo by Pierce Haviland) The Blue Angels do a two-man flyby. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) An Air Force plane. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) Fat Albert demonstrates the JATO-assisted take-off. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) The Blue Angels do a fleur-de-lis. (Photo by Glenn Bloore) Blue Angels perform another trick (Photo by Glenn Bloore)



Medical springs into action during mass casualty drill

By JO1 Jeannette Bowles

It is 6 p.m. on February 22. From out of the darkness cries and moans can be heard across the field as some of NAF El Centro's personnel slip into their roles as accident victims. They are bandaged, "bleeding", dazed, and confused as they lay strewn about the ground. Next to them is a "burning" aircraft that has gone down. Although everything that is happening is a simulation and part of a mass casualty drill, the scene would test the response time and actions of one very important team; Medical.

Before the drill began, Nordine and her crew prepared the volunteers for their roles in the drill. While some volunteers learned how to become stretcher bearers, others, who were playing the victims, had a chance to get made up for the part. Cards were handed out to the volunteers, stating what their injuries would be.

"The injury cards are something that myself and Federal Fire get together with to determine what would be applicable injury given the type of incident it is," said Nordine. "Obviously what we're going to see a lot of, given the fact that



HMC Salvador Rodriguez (Left) applies moulage to one of the "victims" before the mass casualty drill. The moulage gave a realistic look to the simulated scenario (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



HM3 Kenneth Wright (Left) and HM3 Rudy Rios (Second from left) briefs a group of volunteers on how to be a stretcher bearer during the drill. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

"Medical's job out there, in the event of a mass casualty situation, is to facilitate the treatment, stabilization and transportation or evacuation of patients or casualties," said Lt. j.g. Karen Nordine, Medical's physician assistant and disaster preparedness officer. "This is a drill we do every year for the air show. For this particular drill I didn't tell the crew too much because in a real-time situation you're not going to have the time to prepare."



Lt. j.g. Karen Nordine applies moulage to SK1 Robert Smeltzer. Smeltzer was just one of several volunteers to play accident victims during the drill. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

we're dealing with an air craft going down, is a lot of burns, shrapnel, and explosion type of injuries. In the past Federal Fire has been really great about working with us. They actually put together the cards based on our recommendations. Then we go in and pick and choose given the scenario which ones we're going to use."

Once the cards were handed out, it was time to moulage the volunteers. This involved make-up and props.

"Moulage always gives a realistic effect to patient scenarios," said HM1(FMF) Michael Murray, who was the Med Boss for the drill. "If you get a patient that just has a tag on them and you tell them they're supposed to act like they have a broken leg, they can act that way but something visual always stimulates the senses more than somebody telling you something."

Murray has been doing moulage for seven years and said he was taught by Disney experts.

"Granted, all you can do is what you got so you make the best of what you got," said Murray. "If

there's other things I would have had I could have made them look a lot better. But we did well with what we had."

Once all the "patients" were done, it was time to wait.

"You get the call that comes in and you start doing your job," said Murray.



HM3 Jacquetta Washington (Left) shows AOAN Socorro Deanda how to use a moulage prop. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

Once the drill began, it was time to go into action.

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Mass Casualty Drill

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"Each person has their own particular role in a mass casualty," said Nordine. "As soon as the Emergency Operations Command gets activated my crew falls into their roles that they've been assigned to. Most of them have to be with the treatment, stabilization and evacuation of patients. Some of it is in more of an administrative role. Obviously it's in our best interest to keep track of our patients and that can be very difficult in a situation when communications are challenging because of noise and limitations from radios or cell phones."

Lt. Cmdr. James Richards, Medical's Flight Surgeon and the Red Boss during the drill, was responsible for triaging and treating all casualties that were considered casualty red.

"Those injuries are anything that's immediate and life threatening," said Richards.

Working in the same area with Richards was HN Edwin Crawford.

"My role in the drill was to assist the treatment officer with taking care of the casualties that

we received, making sure that they were stable and ready to go," said Crawford.

Crawford said he was prepared for the drill.

"I kept thinking the back of my mind of all the training I received," said Crawford. "All the training that I've done will help me out in the long run when incidences like this really happen."

Both training and adaptation helped out that night as Medical ran into problems they didn't foresee.

"We thought that Federal Fire was going to triage (set up the treatment area) and they didn't," said Richards. "So we



HM1 Solomon Ochabillo carries AC3 Jacob Ruiz on a stretcher towards the triage center during the drill. Ruiz was one of the volunteers who played accident victims during the drill. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



HM1 Michael Murray applies moulage to ABF2 Robert Chiaravallotti during drill preparations. Murray has been doing moulage for seven years. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)

ended up triaging ourselves. But we adapted to the situation and I think everyone did really well."

Communication was another problem they ran into.

"There was some delay because of communication problems in getting our patients transported out," said Richards.

A lack of stretcher bearers was a third issue Medical had that night, but as with all the other problems, Medical adapted to the situation and rose above it.

"We go by an old saying when you come from the Marine side," said Murray. "It's Semper Gumby, which means always flexible. You have to keep Semper Gumby in mind because everything is always going to be different from what you're taught. You have to be able to adjust quickly. When we found out that we didn't have stretcher bearers or they weren't coming when we wanted or needed them to come, we had to make do. So I called over to the treatment area and had them bring a medical personnel to our patients and treat them there."

All in all though, the Medical team was pleased with the job they accomplished during the drill.

"It was a whole team effort," said Crawford. "We must rely on each other to help the team do as much as possible."

"I think our crew did excellent," said Nordine. "We have a very small, but well-trained crew. Because of the size and limitations of our clinic, our personnel have really learned adaptation skills. They cross-train consistently throughout the year and I think that's what makes them very flexible. They will fall into roles and improvise. I call it McGyver medicine out there because a lot of it is. If you can't get a litter bearer then you get out there and get the patients any way you can or you put together some people to get together. Our crew did fantastic out there."



HM3 Kenneth Wright examines an "accident victim" during the drill. The drill tested medical's response time and actions (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



HM2 Chad Roberts (Center) writes down the "patient's" medical information during the drill as HM1 Solomon Ochabillo (Left) and HM1 Alvin Chester look on. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



NASCAR drivers make pit stop at NAF El Centro

By JO1 Jeannette Bowles

"These are some bad dudes."

Those were the words of Scott Lagasse Jr. the moment he landed and took off his helmet. As a driver for NASCAR, Lagasse is used to traveling at fast speeds, but said nothing could have prepared him for what he had just experienced. On February 28, Lagasse and two of his NASCAR teammates had the opportunity to ride as a VIP with the U.S. Navy Blue Angels.

Lagasse is part of the FitzBradshaw racing team in the NASCAR Busch racing series. He drives the No. 40 Cottman Transmission/Jani-King/Goulds Pumps Dodge Charger.

"Two and a half to three hours in a race car doesn't compare," said Lagasse after his flight with the Blue Angels' No. 7 pilot, Lt. John Allison.

Lagasse was the last of his teammates to



AD1 Patrick Palma (Right) gives last-minute instructions to Tim Fedewa before Fedewa's flight. (Photo by PHC Chris Desmond)

take a ride and had nothing but praise for both the ride and the Blue Angels team.

"We did six vertical rolls," said Legasse. "Once we started rolling I lost track of reality. This whole trip has been awesome. These guys are really great. The Blue Angels must be really proud for what they do."

Legasse said they went supersonic and that the ride was far better than he had ever guessed.

David Stremme was the first of his teammates to tackle the flight. Stremme is also part of the FitzBradshaw racing team

and drives the No. 14 Navy Accelerate Your Life Dodge Charger.

"I give these guys a lot of respect," said Stremme of the Blue Angels.

Stremme compared them to a NASCAR racing team and said they were very similar.

"There's a lot to it," said Stremme. "You have to trust your mechanic. You have to trust your guys on the ground to make sure you perform well."

Stremme said he will never forget the feeling when they took off and went straight up in the air. Once up there, Stremme experienced different spins and rolls and traveled at 600 miles per hour above the ground before he decided he had had enough.

"I chickened out early," said Stremme. "But I can't compare it to anything else. The flight was pretty amazing."

Stremme said for him, the highlight of the trip was meeting all the pilots and seeing what they do to get ready to go up in the air.

"I drive the Navy Busch Car," said Stremme. "I love being able to go out and represent the Navy on and off the track."

Stremme said although he did not fly the entire 45 minutes, he would like to do it again.

"Experiencing a ride in the Blue Angels plane and meeting all the pilots was phenomenal," said Stremme.

Tim Fedewa agreed with that. Fedewa drives the Super Cuts, Hot Tamale Dodge No. 12 Dodge Charger and was the second member to fly with the Blue Angels.

"It was awesome and very different from what I expected," said Fedewa. "The take off and landing blew my mind."

During his flight, Fedewa said they went Mach 1.4 or faster than the speed of sound. He said although his 45 minute flight was physically exhausting, the opportunity was once in a life time.

"It was a dream of mine," said Fedewa. "It was one of the things on my to-do list in life. I wanted to ride in a Blue Angels plane and swim with the great white sharks in Africa. Now I can check one of those things



David Stremme prepares to climb aboard the Blue Angels No. 7 plane for his flight. (Photo by PHC Chris Desmond)

off."

Fedewa said he would like to thank everyone for the ride.

"The maintenance crew and the pilots were great," said Fedewa. "It's nice to see the amount of pride that goes into the Blue Angels."



Scott Legasse Jr. gives a thumbs up before his flight in the Blue Angels No. 7 jet. (Photo by PHC Chris Desmond)



Active Duty Members can now play BMR Jeopardy every Wednesday at 3 p.m. in the Mirage Club banquet room!
For more information contact Dana at 339-2599





Sailor/Marine Online Academic Advisor (SMOLAA)



By NCI Pamela Jensen
Command Career Counselor

The Navy College Program has added a "Virtual Counseling" tool to the Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART).

Still under development, the Sailor/Marine Online Academic Advisor (SMOLAA), displays

rating related degrees offered through Navy College Program Distance Learning Partnership institutions. This degree-shopping feature allows Sailors and Marines to watch their SMART credits transfer into a degree program offered by 18 accredited colleges that have partnered with the Navy through distance learning.

With the Navy's emphasis on

enhancing promotion with academic achievement, more service members than ever before are using their military experience to earn college credits toward a degree. Earning a rating related degree through a Navy College Distance Learning Partnership school will also save considerable time and money.

To access the Sailor/Marine Online Academic Advisor

(SMOLAA) and view SMART credits falling into a rating related degree program, log on to your transcript (SMART) at <https://www.navycollege.mil>.

Questions? Call the Navy College Center toll free at 1-800-253-7122, contact the Navy College Office at the Navy Corps Education Center, NCC@enet.navy.mil

The ins and outs of HARP Duty

By NCI Pamela Jensen
Command Career Counselor

Do you want to take leave and go home but just don't have the leave time? HARP duty just might help you with that dilemma.

HARP is the Hometown Area Recruiting Program in which you go back to the area you either graduated high school or attended college to share your experiences and otherwise assist recruiters.

You do have to pay your own expenses, but for 12 days you are home and not charged any leave. Sound like a good deal? See your departmental counselor to get the forms and run your request.

Here's how the program works:

- 1) It is 12 days, Monday Week One to Friday Week Two (No exceptions!)
- 2) You must be a high school graduate.
- 3) You must have no visible tattoos in all military uniforms.
- 4) You must maintain a valid drivers license.
- 5) You must have evaluation marks 3.0 or above.
- 6) You must have no NJP.
- 7) You must support the Navy and be of good moral character.

Building Monitor receives reward for job well done



ABF2(AW) Robert Chiaravallotti (Left) holds \$250 in MWR dollars that he received as a reward for being named Building Monitor of the Quarter for 4th Quarter of FY04. Lt. Ignatius Hickman (Center) holds additional MWR dollars that Chiaravallotti received for his department (Supply) to have a party in honor of his winning. Ensign Jerry Kao (Right), NAF's Energy Manager handed out the MWR dollars during the last Building Monitor meeting held in March. (Photo by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)



Celebrate Month of the Military Child at the Military Child Appreciation Italian Buffet! It will be held on Wednesday, April 13 from 5-8 p.m. at the Mirage Club. For more information call 339-2330.





NASCAR fans get up close and personal with No. 32

By JOI Jeannette Bowles

NASCAR fans at NAF El Centro received a treat February 17, all wrapped up in a sleek, neon orange package. NASCAR's Tide racing car No. 32 paid a visit to the commissary parking lot as a sales reward.

"It's a bonus thing," said Chiquita LaTray, the commissary's store administrator. "It was based on our sales from the previous year."



Sailors stop by to check out the Tide Race car during its visit in February. (Photo by JOI Jeannette Bowles)

LaTray said she was contacted by the Tide Company who arranged for the car to come out.

"The car is a promotion from Tide/Downy who promote NASCAR racing," said Kevin O'Connor, the show car exhibit manager.

O'Connor works for Sports 4 Promotion, the company responsible for bringing the car and putting it on display.

O'Connor, who does about 400 shows a year, said the No. 32 car he brought was raced at one time by its driver Bobby Hamilton Jr., but is now retired.

"In the off season, the car is redone," said O'Connor. "It is repainted and maintained."

During the day, many people stopped by to check out the race car and ask O'Connor questions about it. LaTray said she thought the day went very well.

"People were pleased over



A visitor stops by to check under the hood of the Tide Race Car. The retired car was brought to NAF El Centro as part of a bonus based on the Commissary's sales. (Photo by JOI Jeannette Bowles)

all and we made a few good sales out of it as far as Tide goes," said LaTray.

Each customer who purchased a Tide product during the day received a free

gift from O'Connor.

"This is our program," LaTray provided some of the exciting outlay to get it for

Car show nets third place for Chief McPherson

By JOI Jeannette Bowles

If it's one thing that ITC Jon McPherson knows, it's that his 1966 Impala Super Sport is a winner.

On Sunday, March 6, McPherson entered his car in the Low Rider Magazine Super Car Show held in Phoenix, Ariz.

The morning began at 5:30 a.m. for McPherson who began setting up and getting his car ready for display despite the rain. Although the rain could have been a critical factor, McPherson didn't allow it to deter him. He simply waited the rain out and then recleaned his car.

In the end, McPherson walked away with the third place trophy.



(L to R): Rueben Hernandez, ITC Jon McPherson, and Charlie Linesses stand in front of McPherson's '66 Impala Super Sport with his third place trophy. (Photos by JOI Jeannette Bowles)



February Quarters



Quarters was held Thursday, February 17 at the base gym where Commanding Officer Capt. Paul Ziegler presented the following awards.

First Row (L to R): AO1 Lawrence Douglas received a Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal, AO2 Michael Hodgkin received a Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal, AM3 Jesse Williams received a Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and Alyson Thompson received a Length of Service Award.

Second Row (L to R): BU1 Elton Oliphant was recognized as the Sailor of the Year, AC1 Jason Anton received a Letter of Commendation, AC3 Tiffany Warren received a Letter of Commendation, AOAN Socorro Deanda received a letter of Commendation, and NC1 Pamela Jensen received a Retention Excellence Award. *(Photos by JO1 Jeannette Bowles)*

March Quarters:



(Photos by ITC Peter Potter)

Quarters was held Thursday, March 24 at the base gym where Commanding Officer Capt. Paul Ziegler presented the following awards.

First Row (L to R): Carl David received a Certificate of Excellence Award, John Williams received a Certificate of Excellence Award, ETC Dianna Swansey received a Good Conduct Medal, and MA2 Robert Coleman received a Good Conduct Medal.

Second Row (L to R): MA1 Jose Sanjurjo received a Good Conduct Medal, AO1 Antonio Quintero received a Good Conduct Medal, FC1 Matthew Poulson received a Good Conduct Medal, JO1 Jeannette Bowles received a Good Conduct Medal, and AC2 John Pettigrove received a Good Conduct Medal.

Third Row (L to R): MA2 Richard Krider received a Good Conduct Medal, MA2 Adam Moser received a Good Conduct Medal, MA2 Jason Lowry received a Good Conduct Medal and MASN Elizabeth Hoppman received a Good Conduct Medal.



Youth & Teen Activities

In April, the Youth Activities Center will be hosting a variety of activities. Here are some upcoming events:

April 7: Pajama Party, Trivia Chase and Foosball Tourney: 6-8 p.m.

April 8: Video Night: 6-8:30 p.m.

April 11: Make Your Own Movie Night: 5-8 p.m.

April 12: Bowling Tourney

April 14: Internet Scavenger Hunt and Dominoes Games: 6-8 p.m.

April 19: Surf the Net Night and Jeopardy Challenge: 6-8 p.m.

April 20: Keystone Teen Meeting and Domino Zone Games: 6-8 p.m.

April 21: Mini Olympics and Wheel of Fortune Challenge: 6-8 p.m.

April 27: Brawley Pizza Party: 6-8 p.m.

For more information call 339-2644

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Family Bowling every Friday night 6-8 p.m.	2 Cosmic bowling every Saturday night 6-10 p.m.
3	4	5 Karaoke Night at the Mirage Club 8 p.m.	6 Ladies Night at the Mirage Club 8 p.m. Ext. 2330	7 Barracks Party between Bldgs 4001 & 4002 "Grill & Games" 7:30-9 p.m. X2559	8 Family Bowling every Friday night 6-8 p.m.	9 Junior League Bowling competition 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Ext. 2575
10	11	12 Karaoke Night at the Mirage Club 8 p.m. Single Sailor Night at the pool 8 p.m.	13 Italian Night for the family at the Mirajie Club 5-8 p.m. Volleyball Court 4-6 p.m. at the Sandhill Club 5-1	14 Inn to Sprinklers at the Edison Center 3 p.m. Ext. 2482	15 Family Bowling every Friday night 6-8 p.m.	16 ITT trip to Universal Studios Ext. 2559
17	18	19 Karaoke Night at the Mirage Club 8 p.m.	20 Ladies Night at the Mirage Club Ext. 2330 Mongolian BBQ at the Mirage Club 5-8 p.m.	21	22 Drive In Movie at the small pool 6 p.m. Ext. 2578	23 ITT trip to Seaworld Ext. 2559
24	25	26 Karaoke Night at the Mirage Club 8 p.m. Single Sailor Night at the pool 8 p.m.	27 Ladies Night at the Mirage Club Ext. 2330	28	29 Family Bowling every Friday night 6-8 p.m.	30 Cosmic bowling every Saturday night 6-10 p.m.

NAF El Centro gears up for the Yard of the Month program

By Clara Parrish
Housing Director

The NAF El Centro (NAFEC) "Yard of the Month" program is a recognition program designed to promote neighborhood unity and create an appealing area for all residents of NAF El Centro.

The creative touches enhance the image of the entire neighborhood and show pride in ownership and encourage all residents' participation.

The program is sponsored by the Housing Office, MWR and the NAFEC Command and runs from April through September of each year.

A panel of judges selected

by the Housing Director will critique the yards and winners will be announced at the end of each month.

There will be three winners each month as follows:

- 1) Officer/Chief New Fund Housing Area
- 2) Enlisted New Fund Housing Area
- 3) Enlisted Wherry Housing Area

"Yard of the Month" signs will be placed in the resident's front yards announcing them as the winners of the "Yard of the Month" and highlighting

recognition for their efforts in beautifying the neighborhood.

The winners will have their photo taken and displayed on the NAFEC Command Channel and in the Sandpaper. They will also receive a Letter of Appreciation from the Command and a valuable coupon booklet gratefully donated by MRW for use at various MWR facilities on base.

Winners will be selected based on the following criteria:

- 1) Color and aesthetic appeal from the curb.
- 2) Well-maintained and manicured lawns.

3) Borders and flowerbeds neatly edged and cleaned of weeds and dead plants.

4) Carports and patios neatly maintained. Storage is limited, but these spaces must be clutter-free.

5) General upkeep and overall appearance.

For more information on yard standards refer to the Housing Handbook or contact the housing office at 339-2920.

